

# Employee Experience

A MAGAZINE FOR EMPLOYEES, BY EMPLOYEES

VOLUME 2 ~ ISSUE NO. 03 ~ AUGUST 2021

Office of Workforce Engagement

Department of Human Resource Management



*Re-emerging*

## Engage

Be present and involved

## Connect

Link colleagues and resources

## Recognize

Our employees are incredible





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## NEW FAMILY PET?

Many families grew during the pandemic, with newly adopted pets. We will spotlight employee stories and photos in the *next edition*. Send yours in today!



### Cooking with CommonHealth

Slow cooker stuffing heats up your fall spreads!



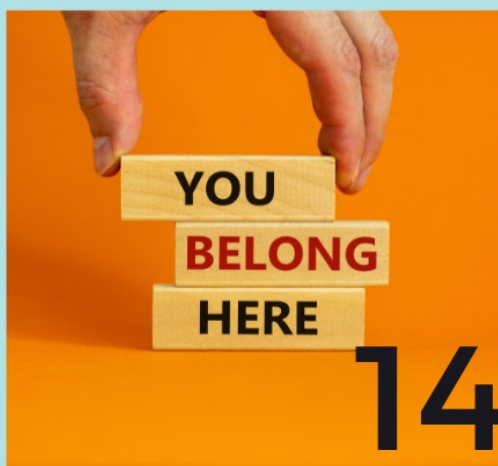
### Reduce Stress as You Return to the Office

Whether you are excited to return or not, you may incur stress regarding the return. What can you do to make it as simple as possible?



### Recognize a Co- Worker

Colleagues nominated colleagues to be recognized! Who do you know on the list? Commonwealth of Virginia Employees are the best!



### Inclusion & Belonging

How does inclusion and belonging apply to the workplace and what you can do to improve it?

## From the Desk of the Chief Editor: Re-emergence in 2021

Re-emergence has been a slow, cautious process—like that of a turtle first peeking out of its shell and slowly bringing its legs out to move. I have hope that soon our re-emergence will be bursting with hope and awe—just like the breaching of a whale.

Let's bring that hopeful energy to our workplaces and colleagues as we return to our locations or create new routines. **What brings you energy, hope, joy, and positivity in 2021? What has your re-emergence looked and felt like?** Our state has so much to offer employees, citizens, and visitors, so go see and do what you can. I am in awe of our Blue Ridge Mountains and the way the sun rises over McAfee's Knob. The vastness of our valleys and plateaus as well as the hustle and bustle of our cities offer so much. Help us all see your part of the state through your lens.

This magazine is truly a magazine for employees, by employees, and therefore, we truly want your stories, your photos, your expertise on these pages. I hope to see photos of Spirit Week 2021 and other engagement opportunities! If you have a **story** to be told, **ideas** or **resources** to share, **talents** to contribute, **congratulations** to be made for hires and promotions, or information on **events or knowledge** to impart, please contact me at [employeeexperience@dhrm.virginia.gov](mailto:employeeexperience@dhrm.virginia.gov).

Susan Perry

### EASE UP INTO THIS SUMMER LIFE

The time has come for the sun;  
To rise every day with its heated ray!  
The time to be out, around & about;  
To get away even if just for a day!  
Work sometimes is like a race and the tiredness shows on our face;  
We strive for results that are good, always perfect - only if we could!  
But we need to rejuvenate, recharge, re-fresh trying to give it all, our best!  
Ease up into this summer life; willing away any strife!  
As we relish the upcoming days and months in this mode of happiness;  
Let us not forget to give a helping hand and give others ease and rest!  
We can share our good times & stories to give a lift to someone's day;  
Being examples to assist in showing them there can be another way!

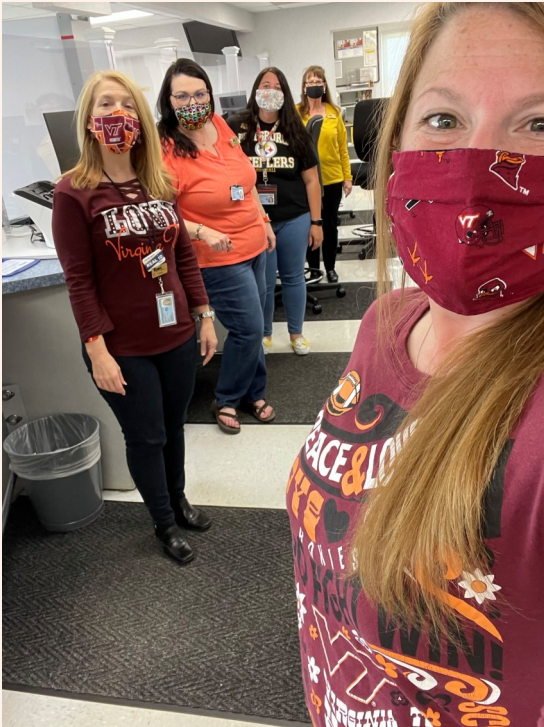
So now is the time to be engaged & surrounded by enlightening things & such;  
And taking the positive attitude, turning it up a notch, no - turning it up much!  
Enjoy all that is coming to you, your life and your love ones now;  
It's time to ease up into this summer life & be in your moments of wow!

© May 2021

By Necil B. Oliver, Published Author  
VADOC, Court & Legal



# Celebrating YOU, Virginia Public Service Week Across the State



*Top: Employees at DMV in Pulaski*

DGS/Office of Fleet Management Services knows how to celebrate their employees! We missed out on photos, but here's a snapshot of the week. They kicked off the week providing each employee a party lei welcoming them to Public Service Week. The employees had daily reminders that provided perspective:

**Marvelous Monday** - "You look Mahvelous!!!" Individual M&M packets for all.

**Terrific Tuesday** - "We were on a roll when we hired you." - Tootsie Rolls available to all.

**Cinco De Mayo Wednesday** - Chicken Fajita lunches (individually packaged).

**Thankful Thursday** - Take 5 Reese Candy Bar available to all - Take 5 minutes to reflect what makes you thankful.

**Fantastic Friday** - "You make this team Fantastic" Individual Fritos snack bags available for all.

(Our group is less than 20 employees, which allows more creativity. No state funds were used in the purchase of the items mentioned above.)



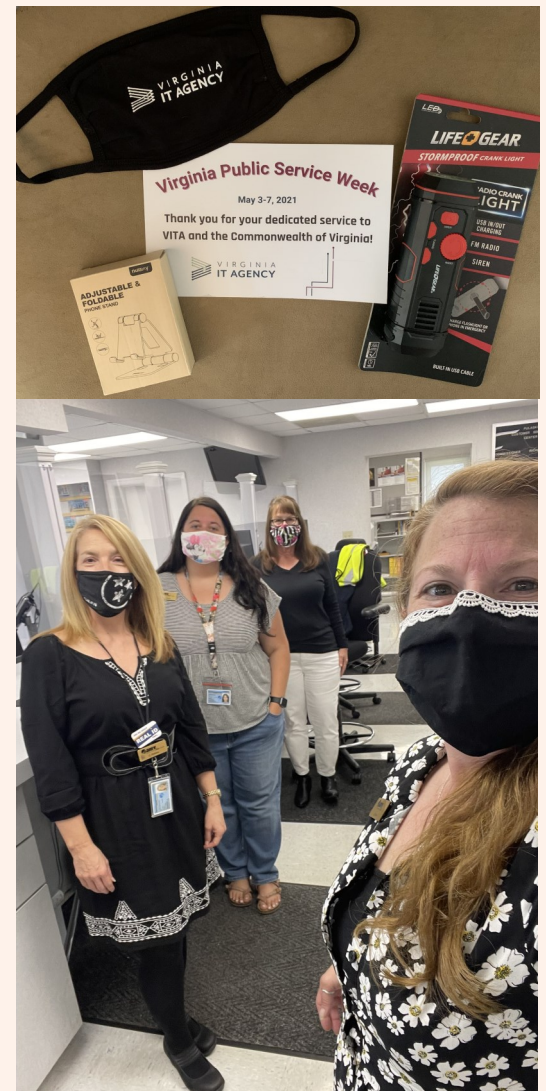
*Right: General District Court in Virginia Beach*



*Left: The Exam Licensing Team with DHP BON met at Mezeh on Monday 05/03/2021 for a Team Lunch. We had a great time seeing each other and sharing a meal for the first time in months! We should have, but didn't take pictures. We will remember to on our next outing. They do have a nice patio, but since it was raining we ate inside.*



Throughout Virginia Public Service Week (VPSW), May 3-7, the Virginia IT Agency (VITA) recognized and thanked staff for their daily commitment to serving the Commonwealth. Since the week's events were all virtual, VITA hosted a variety of fun and engaging activities every day using Microsoft Teams, including just-for-fun employee superlatives, creative break times, interactive questions to help staff get to know each other, and team shout outs to spotlight impressive accomplishments. The agency thanked each team member by sending them a VITA mask, a radio flashlight, and an adjustable phone stand. *(photo top right)*



*Above: DMV in Pulaski*

*Below: General District Court in Virginia Beach*







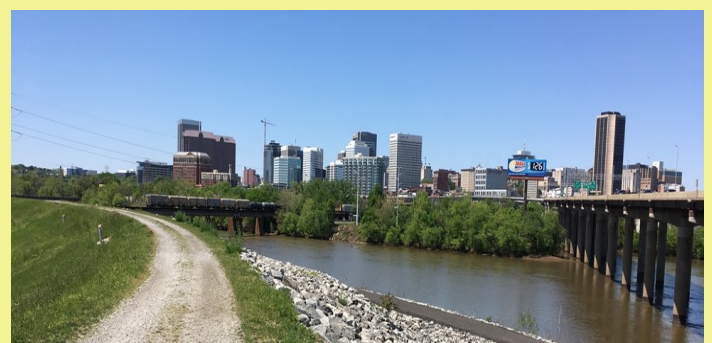
river.

This 1.5 mile section of trail is nicely wooded with a dirt trail that parallels the river. As an interesting side note, this part of the James River is very tidal, so depending on when you travel the trail you can see significant changes in the river level. If you are



hiking in April you will likely see many boats out fishing for shad. There are 5 placards along the trail that describe how the Slave Trail was used that provide an important history of the trail.

Once you reach the end of this section, you will come to the flood wall with great views of the skyline. The path continues across the 14<sup>th</sup> Street Mayo Bridge and into the city following the Canal Walk. Any section of this trail serves as a very enjoyable walk for a lunch break or after work leg stretcher.

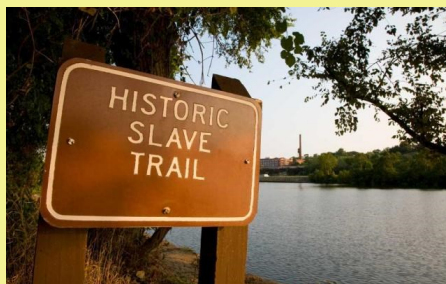


## Virginia's Slave Trail in Richmond

In our next steps forward with Hike with Mike, we take a path back in time. This hike is not only a great walk conveniently located within the city of Richmond, but also a great self-guided educational experience. Though the trail has an infamous past due to its connection to enslavement, today it gives us an opportunity to remember the lives of people who walked it before us and to use it for a constructive purpose for wellness.

Virginia's Slave Trail in Richmond is an easy,

mostly flat trail with a mix of dirt trail, brick walkway, and sidewalks. Today we will hike a section of this called Ancarrow's Trail.



You can walk this trail in any direction you like or just sections at a time; it can be accessed in a number of places. Today we will begin at the official start location, Ancarrow's Landing, just south of the James River on Brander Street. There is a nice area for parking, and the trail begins as you walk toward the



# CommonHealth Wellness Champions

## Wellness at work

The average person spends 50% of their waking hours at work from Monday to Friday, meaning that wellness is an important part of your time on the job.

## Who inspires you?

Is there someone in your workplace that makes you want to live your best life? Maybe someone who runs your office wellness challenges, organizes a walking group, or makes sure healthy snack options are available.

## Recognize the Good

Nominate your favorite encouraging colleague for the CommonHealth Wellness Champion Award and read more about this recognition program at [CommonHealth.virginia.gov](https://CommonHealth.virginia.gov)



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The Virginia Department of  
Human Resource Management

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The Office of  
Workforce Engagement

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[Click here to nominate a Wellness Champ](https://CommonHealth.virginia.gov/nominatewellnesschamp)

## Interval Walking: More Benefits, Less Time

Are you looking to get more out of your walking routine? You can gain more health benefits in less time by adding interval walking!

Interval walking is simply alternating short bursts of faster, intense walking with longer intervals of moderate walking. This keeps walks more interesting and may even:

- Jump start your metabolism
- Burn more calories
- Assist with weight management
- Increase cardiovascular endurance
- Improve glucose control and diabetes management
- Decrease heart disease risk
- Reduce social anxiety and depression.

What are you waiting for? Invite a co-worker and try this sample interval walking routine! Remember to always check with your health care provider before beginning any new exercise program.

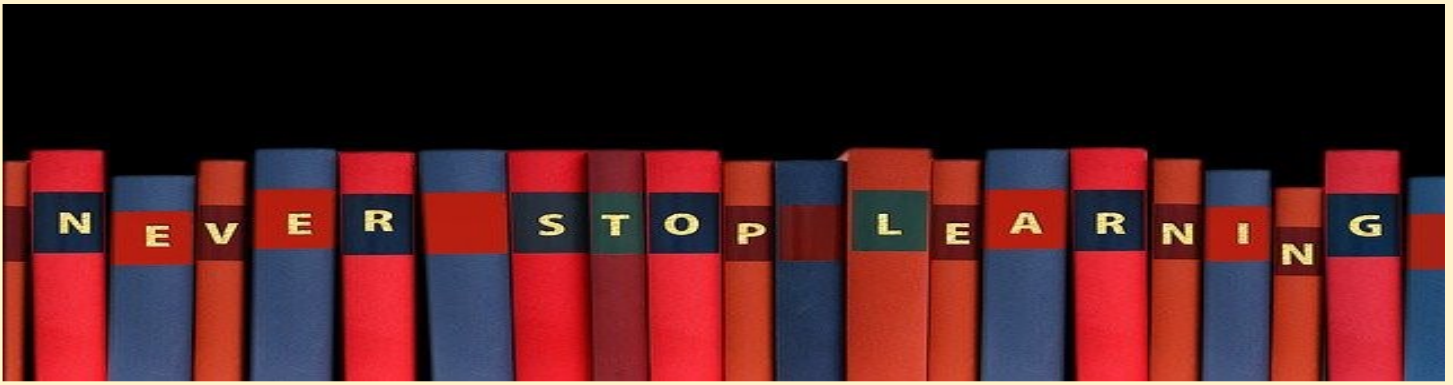
Article Sources: American College of Sports Medicine, National Academy of Sports Medicine, National Institutes of Health, May Clinic, and US National Library of Medicine



Approximately 20-30 minute interval walking plan to try:

- 5 minute warmup
- 1 minute moderate paced walking
- 15 seconds walking briskly or faster for 15 seconds
- 1 minute moderate walking for recovery
- 15 seconds walking faster (you should be breathing a little heavier)
- 1 minute moderate pace
- 15 seconds fast as you can walk
- 1 minute moderate pace
- (Repeat this cycle of moderate and fast walking two to three more times if you can. If not, gradually build up to a couple more cycles.)
- 5 minute moderate to slower pace walking to cool down
- Stretch 5 minutes or more to gain flexibility, increase range of motion, and decrease sore muscles.





## Learning Is Not A One Item Menu *Deanna Goldstein, DHRM*

Imagine if you went to a restaurant with your family or friends, and once there, realized that the restaurant had a one item menu. That's right....only one item on the menu from which to choose. And, imagine that some family members or friends do not particularly like the one menu item. What would you do? How would you manage the situation? Would you stay and encourage everyone to eat the one menu item? Would some of you stay and some of you leave? Or, would you all leave and try to find another restaurant? With a one item menu, a restaurant runs the risk of not meeting the differing needs of diverse customers.

Using a one item menu approach to learning also runs risks for learners, and ultimately, for organizations. We are all diverse and learn in different ways. And, it is not just diversity in learning approaches between people... we also have our own learning diversity within us. For certain types of learning needs, we may learn best with—or prefer—a certain method. For example, when learning something technical, you may prefer or learn best with on-the-job training. For developing professional skills such as leadership development,

you may learn best with facilitator led classroom discussions or coaching.

As humans, we are not one-dimensional and such approaches to learning rarely meet learning needs and goals. We are all diverse, and how we learn requires varied learning methods targeted to specific needs.

To determine methods that may best align with specific learning goals and needs, check out [DHRM's Learning Methods Guide](#). This guide provides an overview of learning methods and how they may align with specific learning objectives: Grow Knowledge, Grow Technical Skills & Abilities, and Grow Behavioral Skills & Abilities. The guide provides consideration for organizations who are designing learning opportunities for employees. As an employee, you can also use this guide to inquire about learning approaches with your agency to best align with your learning goals.

While a one item menu may appear to provide efficiency and simplicity, it often will not meet the diversity of learning needs and goals. The better approach is to create a learning menu that includes multiple items that best align with your learning goals.

# COORDINATORS' CORNER

## Info & Tips for CVC and CommonHealth Coordinators

### CVC Agency Spotlight, Peer to Peer Fundraising

With many employees working remotely during the 2020 Campaign, agencies sought a way to host virtual events to raise funds for CVC Charities. One option was for employees to create peer-to-peer fundraising campaigns. Peer-to-peer giving allows employees to share campaigns with both their colleagues inside their agencies, as well as with their friends and family outside the state employee network. 46 peer-to-peer campaigns were created in 2020, raising more than \$55,000 for charities!

Entire agencies also took advantage of peer-to-peer campaigns in lieu of hosting in-person special events. A huge shout-out to these agencies:

Virginia Retirement System: Cookbook Sale, raised \$1,730.

Virginia Department of Transportation: Reindeer Run, raised \$265.

Virginia Department of Transportation, Staunton: Gives Day, raised \$2,995.

Virginia Information Technologies Agency: Gives Day, raised \$3,225.

Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles: Operation Holiday Spirit, raised \$1,306.

Peer-to-peer giving will be back for the 2021 Campaign. Contact CVC Support for more information on how your agency can use it!

### CommonHealth in 2021, You Can Call on Us!



Take full advantage of the fresh start for the workplace.

Use your return to work as an opportunity to redefine your workplace culture and focus it on health and employee support.



TRAINING FORMATS TO INCLUDE EVERYONE

#### Virtual

- Google Meet, Zoom, And Microsoft Teams Friendly Presentations
- Micro Learning Videos
- YouTube Playlists
- Learning Center Courses

#### Face to Face

- Training Days And Meetings
- Recognition Events
- Learning Stations
- Health and Benefits Fairs
- From 15 Minute Mini-courses To 2 Hour Seminars And Everything In Between



#### TOPIC CHOICES



**BETTER NIGHTS AHEAD**

**SLEEP BETTER**

Become the good sleeper you've always wanted to be



**STAY WELL**

Learn about managing pain medication safely



**TIME TO FEEL BETTER**

**MOVE MORE**

Use the time you have to feel great

Build a better normal in 2021.

Contact your Regional Wellness Consultant to schedule a program at your location. Visit <https://commonhealth.virginia.gov/coordinators.htm> to find your Consultant.





Introducing the 2021 CVC Inspiring Image Contest! The Commonwealth of Virginia Campaign (CVC) Inspiring Image Employee Contest is a new spin on a long-standing tradition of community engagement through the arts. The contest theme is “Virginia is for Givers,” and submissions should reflect charitable giving, caring, generosity, helpfulness, or sharing. The best submission will be selected by employees and the public.

The purpose and mission of the program is to provide an outlet of engagement for Commonwealth of Virginia Employees to share their artistic eye and abilities as it relates to the tenets of the CVC program. The goal is to bring our employees together through moving and inspiring works of art from their colleagues. Prizes will be awarded to winners of each of the different categories. To submit your image or learn more about the contest, go to [www.cvcgives.org](http://www.cvcgives.org) today.

**Who can enter?** Virginia state employees are eligible and encouraged to submit their original two-dimensional works.

**What types of submissions are accepted?** Original two-dimensional works, including photographs, digital images, paintings, and drawings.

**Where and how can I submit my entry?**

Visit [www.cvcgives.org](http://www.cvcgives.org) > CVC INSPIRING IMAGE CONTEST

What are the key dates of the contest?

Submissions accepted online through September 3<sup>rd</sup>. Public voting online from September 6<sup>th</sup> - 17<sup>th</sup>. Winner announced at the CVC Kickoff Event, tentatively September 29<sup>th</sup>.

Questions?

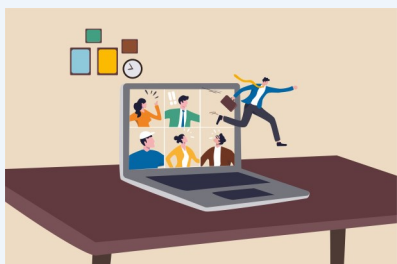
Email [support@cvcgives.org](mailto:support@cvcgives.org)

## Strategies to Reduce Stress when Returning to the Office



Last year, the COVID-19 pandemic turned our world upside down and we had to adjust. Now, with restrictions lifting and things reopening, we find ourselves having to adjust again. While we have eagerly awaited the return to normalcy, the road back may feel a bit bumpy and, understandably, stressful.

Consider these tips to smooth the transition back to work.



### Do a trial run

Choose a day **before** you actually return to work to practice your routine. Wake up, eat breakfast, get dressed, pack your lunch, and commute just as you normally would to get to work on time. This will help to prepare you for what the new routine will feel like. It will also help you work out unforeseen hiccups—for example, has parking changed or do you know where your work ID is? Be sure to include the kids in your dry run if getting them to school or childcare is part of your morning routine. If pandemic weight gain necessitates a few new wardrobe options, don't beat yourself up (you've been

through a lot) and look at it as an opportunity to try something new.

### Simplify and practice self-care

Make a commitment to stop running yourself ragged. Try to simplify at home by scaling back ambitious activity schedules (have the kids pick one or two activities they really love that are beneficial), continue to shop online for groceries and other necessities, and re-establish rules and routines around screen time, mealtime, and sleep hygiene.

Practice good self-care by making sure you are eating well, getting enough exercise, prioritizing sleep, and making time for activities that help you relax like reading, meditation, or listening to music.

### Build a more balanced day

Think of this as a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to “re-set.” Reclaim the work-life boundaries blurred by the pandemic and strive to leave work at work. Also, give extra attention to those things that were difficult to do remotely—like face-to-face meetings, lunch with friends, and other social interactions we have missed this past year. Use your commuting time wisely—listen to podcasts, music, books,



or simply use the time to unwind and reflect. Make time for the things that provide you joy and meaning and do more of them.

### **Seek (and give) support**

We all like to think of ourselves as self-sufficient and able to cope with any challenge that presents itself. However, science tells us that we do better when we don't go it alone. We have all changed in some way because of the pandemic and it's time to get to know one another again. Know whom you can turn to for support and look out for those needing your support. While some uneasiness or anxiety about the return to normal is expected, if you are experiencing a high level of distress that is interfering with your day-to-day life, consider reaching out to the [Employee Assistance Program](#) or a mental health professional for help.

### **Mind your mindset**

It is best to approach this adjustment period with flexibility and an open mind. Think about what you can control and not what you cannot control. For example, you cannot control whether, or when, you have



to return to the office or how others will behave, but you can take control of how you react to the challenging and changing situation. Having rigid expectations about the transition causes added stress, so instead, approach things with the understanding that this is new territory and will require you to adjust. Think about it from the perspective of moving forward, not going back.

### **Honor the Process**

Some changes will go smoothly and others probably won't. Returning to work and other face-to-face interactions while adjusting to COVID-related concerns may feel overwhelming. Be patient as you navigate the challenges ahead. While the changes last year happened quickly, the transition back to normalcy will happen slowly and it will be bumpy. It's a good time for us all to practice grace and compassion – for others and ourselves.



## Inclusion & Belonging in Our Work Bill Brazier, DHRM

As many of our readers may know, the online module on Cultural Competence that is required for state employees was released in June. In this learning module, participants have been asked to think about the concepts of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, and how they relate to each other. One of the main points of the module is this: We don't "create" diversity. Diversity is already here and is all around us. It defines our human communities in today's world. What we can create, however, is *inclusion*—through equitable practices, dispositions, and behaviors. This type of inclusion, attentive to equity, creates a sense of *belonging* in human beings. Take for example, what happens when we don't engage in inclusive practices that have an eye toward equity: the famous case of the "Little Rock Nine" of Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas in 1957.



*Elizabeth Eckford, one of the Little Rock Nine, missed the phone call organizing the rides to Central High with other Black students integrating the school. She arrived alone and faced a mob. (Photo credit: creativecommons.org)*

Those brave nine students who integrated Central High and drew the attention of the nation could be said to have enhanced the "diversity" of Central High School, since previously all the students there were White. But were

the Little Rock Nine really "included" as members of the student community? Were they treated equitably?—i.e. with attention paid to their needs? Did they actually feel as though they belonged in Central High? The answer to these last three questions is, unfortunately, no. Their identities were not welcomed, valued, encouraged, affirmed, or nurtured. They were made to feel that they did not *belong*. (PBS Video, *Eyes on the Prize: Fighting Back*—The Little Rock Nine)

Little Rock Central High in 1957 is definitely an extreme example of the absence of equity, inclusion, and therefore, belonging, but many institutional, organizational, and even unconsciously biased processes and approaches still plague our workforce and our society today.

### ***BELONGING* in the Workplace**

"Belonging" in the workforce is not just a nice idea. It turns co-workers into colleagues, and "a job" into a mission with a purpose. It has even been shown to increase job performance by 56%! (Harvard Business Review, *The Value of Belonging at Work*, December 16, 2019 ) But what does "belonging" look like? How do we create it?

First, by just being informed—about people in our society, in our workforce, and our own agencies. And this doesn't always mean asking others about their backgrounds, though oftentimes that can be appropriate. It means doing some work ourselves: reading news stories, listening to podcasts, watching documentaries about experiences and histories of people different from ourselves. We live in a diverse society, and we have a responsibility to learn



what that means and what our fellow citizens need, want, and are able to do.

Second, by examining our own behaviors, thoughts, and assumptions with an equity lens. Here's a simple reflective activity we can all adopt as a "habit of mind:" Ask yourself to follow the "Platinum Rule" over the "Golden Rule." Many readers are probably familiar with the Golden Rule: *Treat other people as you would like to be treated.* While thinking to ourselves about how we would like to be treated can be a constructive reflective practice, it is still "me-centric." In other words, thinking about our own needs, feelings, and logic models can often give us a push in the direction of respect for fellow human beings, but this is not a reflection process that asks us to specifically consider the needs, experiences, and logic models of *other people*. Consider the Platinum Rule: *Treat other people the way **they** would like to be treated.*

### **The PLATINUM RULE and Cultural Competence**

Imagine what you could do for fellow employees' sense of belonging if you extended yourself to find out about their experiences, and then acted in a way to affirm those experiences. This is why cultural competence is so important. We can't act to affirm other people's needs and experiences if we don't know what those needs and experiences are. Among other things, cultural competence is the awareness of other people's needs and

experiences.

The Platinum Rule leads us to the imperative we all face, and that is to accept a dual responsibility in work and life relationships. Colleagues need to be willing to clearly communicate their experiences and needs—to educate people with whom they work, but all of us also have an obligation to find out on our own, without always asking colleagues to educate us, what others' experiences, needs, and talents are.

So where does this all lead? What practical steps and structures should be put in place in work environments to advance the Platinum Rule and a sense of belonging? First, workplaces need to offer regular opportunities for collective learning with colleagues. These need to be safe spaces where employees can share their thoughts, perspectives, needs, and experiences—for the improvement of relationships and the enhancement of collaborative productivity. Second, workplaces—and leadership in agencies and organizations—need to structure regular and open listening sessions so that honest feedback from employees can be heard and considered. There are multiple studies that show the sense of belonging jumps upward when employees feel that their views, observations, and experiences are listened to, and when their ideas are incorporated into organizational practice and processes. (*How to Create a Sense of Belonging at Work*, by Stuart Sinclair, May 18, 2021 on Talkfreely )

For some great ideas and research on the topic of belongingness at work, check out these resources:

- Society for Human Resource Management, *Why Does Belonging Matter at Work?*, by Steven Huang, July 3, 2020, <https://blog.shrm.org/blog/why-does-belonging-matter-at-work>
- Glint, *Why Belonging is Important at Work: Employee Engagement and Diversity*, by Archana Ramesh, April 23, 2020, <https://www.glintinc.com/blog/why-belonging-is-important-at-work-employee-engagement-and-diversity/>
- Forbes, *Belonging at Work is Essential—Here are 4 Ways to Foster it*, by Rebecca Fraser-Thill, September 16, 2019, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/rebeccafraserthill/2019/09/16/belonging-at-work/?sh=451169a74ab8>

## Recognize a Co-worker

Employees all across the state continue to shine in their service to the Commonwealth. Please join us in celebrating the following employees recognized by their peers for making a difference. Congratulations and thank you! [Click here](#) to read more about our outstanding colleagues.



If you would like to recognize any employee (or group of employees) for going above and beyond to help maintain operations, assist co-workers or the public, or ensure safety during these turbulent times, [click here to complete a short form](#). DHRM will continue to post these notes of recognition on our website and/or social media.

Debi-Jill Keller, DBHDS Western State Hospital  
All employees, VSU Institutional Advancement  
Outside farm crew officers, DOC Deerfield Men's Work Center  
Debby Arnold, DEQ Tidewater  
Susan Throckmorton, Longwood University (ITTIP)  
Zach Sneed, VCU Rehabilitation Research and Training Center  
Communications Team, Northern Virginia Community College  
Jenifer Nalli, DSS Fairfax  
IT Services, DARS and Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center  
Margaret Allworth, DSS Fairfax  
Claire Harding, VCU University Relations  
Barbara Stigall, DBHDS Hiram W. Davis Medical Center  
Emily Severson, Virginia Indigent Defense Commission- Winchester  
Peter Jones, WTJU 91.1FM University of Virginia  
A-Break Day and Night Supervisors, DOC Lunenburg Correctional Center.  
Lisa Hudson, DSS Fairfax  
Sarah Marbert, DSS Fairfax  
Ann Dramstad, DSS Fairfax  
All Employees, DARS Division of Rehabilitative Services  
All Employees, JMU School of Integrated Sciences  
Delores Paulding, RN, BSN, MS, VDH  
All Employees, VADOC District 31  
Medical Staff, DBHDS Western State Hospital



Carolyn Cress, Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services Richmond  
VSU Department of Health, Physical Education and Recreation

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Dr. Benita Brown	Dr. Portia Miller
Simin Eslamian	Anthony Mills
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Steve Harrison	Bob Lawson
Lea Perlas	Maxine McCarthy
Richard Conway	Al Perlas
Frances Cosby	Cindy Thomas
Patsy Hayden	Bernice Thornton
Jessica Kaufmann	Julio Torres
Kim Knight	Tom Verdicchio

Amy Snearer, VDH Henrico  
James Crumpacker, VDOT Hydraulics  
William McCormick, Massey Cancer Center IT  
Christa Simpkins, DCR Claytor Lake State Park  
Britney Epps, Eastern Virginia District Office  
Eilene Gibson, DHCD Human Resources  
Amy Nearman, Northern Virginia Community College  
Anna Tuomisto, DBHDS Western State Hospital  
Lisa Reynolds, VDOT Salem District  
Officer Neptune, VADOC Central Virginia Unit 13  
Officer Bowman, VADOC Central Virginia Unit 13  
Officer Snow, VADOC Central Virginia Unit 13  
Officer Munnerlyn, VADOC Central Virginia Unit 13  
Rebecca Worley and all employees, VDOT Chesterfield  
Tiffany Jenkins, DARS Culpeper  
Lynn Lineberger, DARS Culpeper  
All employees, DJJ Tazewell County Juvenile & Domestic Relations Court  
All employees, Catawba Hospital  
Marcella Luna, Department of Health Professions  
All Library Staff, Northern Virginia Community College

All employees, DMV Suffolk Motor Carrier Service Center (Weigh Station)  
 Winnie Totten, Department of Judicial Services  
 Carol Resavage, Department of Judicial Services  
 Jen Pullen, Department of Historic Resources, Richmond  
 Jennifer Saunders, Supreme Court of Virginia  
 Ginger Quinn, VDOT Traffic Engineering  
 All employees, DMAS Division of Behavioral Health  
 Hope White, VDH Roanoke City Health Department  
 Lisa Perry and Covington TWIP Unit, VEC Covington Field Office  
 Rea Prilliman, VDH Danville  
 All employees, DMAS Appeals Division  
 Debby Arnold, DEQ Tidewater Regional Office  
 Renee Tabb, VDH Shared Business Services  
 All Nurses and DSAs, Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center  
 Joel Reinford, DEQ  
 Sherry Tostenson, DEQ Central Office  
 Mary Beth Keese, DEQ Blue Ridge Region  
 Timothy Petrie, DEQ - Blue Ridge Region  
 Tammy Cohen, DEQ Training Services  
 Nick Shrewsbury, DEQ Training Services  
 Jan Briede, DEQ Training Services  
 Doug Foran, DEQ Training Services  
 Melissa MacIntyre, DEQ Training Services  
 Kim Seckman, DEQ Training Services  
 Robin Merkle, DEQ Training Services  
 Lisa Hardy, DEQ Training Services  
 Marilee Tretina, DEQ Training Services  
 Mike Crocker, DEQ Clean Water Financing and Assistance Program  
 Keith Showman, DEQ Valley Region  
 Brandon Kiracofe, DEQ Valley Region  
 Christina Benton, VDH Office of Family Health Services  
 Kathleen Hall, VDH Lexington-Rockbridge  
 Gary Flory, DEQ Harrisonburg/Valley Office  
 Amy Owens, DEQ Harrisonburg/Valley Office  
 Charlene Rollins, Compensation Board  
 Dasmie Myles, VADOC State Farm Correction Center  
 Managers and Unit Supervisors, DARS Northern District  
 Polly Jones, VDH Crater Health District  
 Wanda Bradley, VDH Crater Health District  
 Sandi Brothers, VDH Franklin  
 Caroline Campbell, VDH DDP  
 Nancy Elfino, DHRM Office of Workforce Engagement  
 Program Audit Team (a.k.a the A-Team), Office of Children's Services  
 Casey Perry, VSU Student Engagement  
 Tiffany Severs, DEQ Enforcement



Staff and statewide Disease Intervention Specialists, VDH Division of Disease Prevention

Dr. Latoya Griffin-Thomas, DCLS

Harrisonburg CCAP, DOC Harrisonburg, Virginia Department of Corrections

Tabatha Mamorno, DOC ERO

Sarah G. Gibbs, DOC ERO

Mary Ann Bowersock, VEC Fredericksburg

Brenda Parrish, DBHDS Virginia Center for Behavioral Rehabilitation

Sarah Vines, DBHDS SWVMHI

Mary Hood, DJJ, Bon Air Juvenile Correctional Center

Clinic Team, VDH Portsmouth

Nancy Tobin, DHRM

Pat Waller, DHRM

Terri Hughes, DHRM

Taris Harmon, DHRM

Marjorie McGregor, DHRM

Derek Mountford, DHRM

Debbie Wyatt-Smith, DHRM

Mike Barry, DHRM

Do you know someone who has earned recognition for a job well done? [You can recognize them today!](#)



## Oh My Gourdness!

It's almost time to start thinking about the "Pick of the Patch" decorating contest! We don't want to "squash" your artistic choices, so feel free to choose any pumpkin, gourd, melon, or maybe even a cucumber, and get those creative juices flowing.

The contest opens in October and final entries will be due on November 1. You can carve, paint, glue ... heck, even crochet or knit your decorations! Categories will include spookiest, funniest, and most creative!

Stay tuned to social media (Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter) for more details on how to enter!



# EMPLOYEE FINANCIAL WELLNESS



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## Celebrate and Learn

Bill Brazier, DHRM



As a way to boost our cultural competence and learn about the experiences of our fellow citizens and colleagues, it helps to increase our awareness of the celebrations and culturally significant commemorations of the people we work and live with in Virginia and the United States. Here are some of the recent or soon-to-be-happening days or months of remembrance and recognition that are meaningful to our diverse neighbors and colleagues in the workforce. Knowing about these important days and months of recognition will help all of us affirm the identities of friends and fellow workers, and increase the general *belonging* of everyone in our workplaces.

**August 9: International Day of the World's Indigenous People:** Did you know that there are 573 federally recognized tribes of native peoples in the United States, and 11 recognized tribes in Virginia? Native peoples are believed to have been in Virginia for as long as 22,000 years, and today constitute approximately .5% of Virginia's population. Many people wonder what name the Native Peoples of Virginia and the United States prefer: "Native American?" "Indian?" "Native Peoples of the Americas?" Though some people who come from indigenous ancestors in the Americas may refer to themselves as "Indians," this is not the case for all Native Peoples. It might be best to start by using the terms "Native Peoples of the

Americas" or "Native Peoples," and then let people with indigenous identities tell you in their own time what name they, as individuals, prefer. Remember that the indigenous Native American population in Virginia is itself diverse. Visit <https://encyclopediavirginia.org/entries/indians-in-virginia/> for more information.

**August 9: Hijri New Year Islamic Holiday:** Muslims celebrate the New Year according to a calendar that started with the move of the Prophet Mohammed to the city of Medina from the city of Mecca. Mohammed and his followers were persecuted and sought refuge for their right to worship in Medina. An important thing to note is that the Shia adherents of Islam and the Sunni adherents of Islam celebrate the New Year in different ways, owing to historical events surrounding the leadership of Islam after Mohammed's death. Like other major religions, Islam is not monolithic; there are different sects and different beliefs and cultures within it. For more on the Muslim New Year, go to <https://www.newsweek.com/five-things-know-about-islamic-hijri-new-year-1115452>.

**August 17: Marcus Garvey Day:** Jamaica, the land of Marcus Garvey's birth, has declared August 17 to be Marcus Garvey Day. Garvey started the Universal Negro Improvement Association and the African Communities League. He organized people for his "Back to Africa" movement from Harlem, New York, and advocated Pan-Africanism—the removal of colonial power from the continent of Africa and its unification as one state under his leadership. Notable about Garvey was his advocacy of racial separatism for the purpose of Black affirmation and empowerment. Some cities in the U.S., such as Atlanta, hold

Marcus Garvey celebrations—as does, of course, the nation of Jamaica. For more on Marcus Garvey, see <https://www.history.com/topics/black-history/marcus-garvey>.



**August 26: Women’s Equality Day:** At the behest of Rep. Bella Abzug (D-NY), in 1971 and passed in 1973, the U.S. Congress designated August 26 as “Women’s Equality Day.” The date was selected to commemorate the 1920 certification of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution, recognizing a woman’s right to vote. Many American workplaces, libraries, organizations, and public facilities now participate with Women’s Equality Day programs, displays, video showings, or other activities. Chief among the issues for further action by U.S. women discussed and demanded on this day is the gender wage gap. In 2020, it was calculated that U.S. women, of all races combined, earn 82 cents for every dollar U.S. men of all races make. Regardless of the types of jobs either gender holds, the gap remains, and a logical question is, “Why are women holding the jobs that pay less than the jobs men have?” For more on this commemorative day, see <https://nationalwomenshistoryalliance.org/resources/commemorations/womens-equality-day/>.

## August 29: Krishna Janmashtami

**Hindu Holiday:** This is the day when Hindus, who are polytheistic, celebrate the incarnation of the god Vishnu in the human, Krishna. Many Hindus celebrate the day with fasting, nighttime vigils, and dance/drama re-enactments of the events of Krishna’s life. Krishna is seen as symbolic of the relationship between humanity and divinity, and as a just person who established a kingdom after the slaying of his evil uncle who tried to kill him. For more on Hinduism and the importance of the Krishna celebration, see <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Janmashtami>.

**SEPTEMBER is Hispanic Heritage Month:** The term “Hispanic”

refers to people from Spanish-speaking countries. It came into usage in the U.S. in the 1980 census. Since it specifically references Spanish language as its unifying identifying feature, it includes people of Spanish heritage (i.e. from Spain), but does not include people from Brazil, where Portuguese is the national language. Still, people who identify as “Hispanic” are very diverse: Indigenous peoples of Latin America who speak Spanish are called Hispanic, people of Afro-Caribbean lineage can be Hispanic since Spanish could be their main language, and people who are racially White in Argentina are Hispanic also because their main language is Spanish! So, as you can see, “Hispanic Heritage” is a celebration of many, many cultures and backgrounds. For more on the identities that can accompany the term “Hispanic,” see <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2020/09/15/who-is-hispanic/>.





**SEPTEMBER is National Guide Dog Month:** Guide dogs and our colleagues and fellow citizens who are differently-abled have to develop a special relationship. The dog and the owner have to build a relationship of trust and communication that really is amazing to



watch, and to think about. Remember that guide dogs are extensions of the human beings that rely on them; don't pet guide dogs or distract them from the important work they're doing to help their owners. Most importantly, remember that guide dogs are attached to a person! Talk to the person who has the dog, respect their collaborative space and their identity, and think about people with guide dogs as colleagues and neighbors who just have a different way of getting around. Most importantly, consider the owner and the guide dog as a package, and reflect on how to bring fellow citizens with guide dogs into full participation and access in work, recreation, and citizenship. For more on National Guide Dog Month, see <https://esighteyewear.com/national-guide-dog-month-history-etiquette-tips-and-facts/>.

**September 6: Labor Day:** This is the day that is about the appreciation and respect for labor and workers in our society. During the Industrial Revolution in the United States, large corporate interests had to be convinced that people who worked for them were not just “commodities” or parts of an industrial

machine, but were people who deserved respect for their work and for their humanity. When the Pullman train car company fired a large number of workers in 1893, and then still made them pay rents and food prices that the company monopolized because the workers all lived in “Pullman Town,” railroad workers went on strike and protested. The American Railway Union leader, Eugene Debs, organized a sympathy boycott of Pullman cars and trains. The Pullman Company got a federal injunction to stop labor actions, troops were called in, and protests turned bloody and violent. Thirty laborers for the railway were killed. The labor action and the subsequent violence led to President Cleveland's support for a National Holiday recognizing the importance of labor—and Labor Day became law in June of 1894. Inclusion and Belonging are about supporting the humanity and contributions of *all* workers. Read more about Labor Day here: <https://www.history.com/news/labor-day-pullman-railway-strike-origins>.



**September 6-8: Rosh Hashanah Jewish Holiday:** This is one of the High Holy Days of Judaism, along with Yom Kippur ten days later. Rosh Hashanah is said to be the day the world was created, and during the 10 days that follow, believers spend time in prayer, reflection, and focusing on good deeds and good works in anticipation of Yom Kippur, the “Day of Atonement.” It is a very solemn and significant time for

rededication to God, to Torah, and to Halakha—Jewish law. For more on the importance of this Jewish holiday, see <https://www.history.com/topics/holidays/rosh-hashanah-history> .

**September 16: Mexican Independence Day:** On this date in 1810, Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla, a Catholic priest known as Father Hidalgo, made a moving speech and inspired others to join in an improvised “army” to fight for Mexico’s independence from Spain. Father Hidalgo was eventually caught and executed, but his call for independence began the 10-year struggle for independence from Spanish rule. Today, people in Mexico and of Mexican heritage celebrate the day with parades, mariachi concerts, and food. The President of Mexico traditionally rings the church bell in the village of Dolores—the same bell rung by Father Hidalgo to call his fellow citizens to fight for independence. See more about Mexican Independence Day here: <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/culture/article/mexico-independence-day-confusion-cinco-de-mayo> .

Join the Anywhere Activities Team in Spirit Week Fun!

More details available in early September via social media, email, or HR departments.

[Share](#) your celebration across the state with photos to be published in the next issue of *EmployeeExperience!*

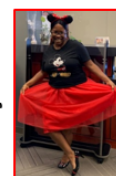


September 13<sup>th</sup> - 17<sup>th</sup>

Monday - Cartoon Day



Dress like your favorite cartoon character



Tuesday - Twin Day

Coordinate with your bestie and come to work #Twinning

Wednesday - Beach Day



Break out the beach towels & sunscreen



Thursday - Decades Day

What was your favorite decade? See if we can guess!

Friday - Game Day



Show your school/team spirit by wearing your team colors!

*Outfits must be work appropriate for each of the themed days.*

## Capitol Square Healthcare Corner

During the summer months, we want to take the opportunity to remind everyone about sun safety and the importance of vitamin D.

### Sun Safety Tips

- ✓ Stay in the shade
- ✓ Limit sun exposure from 10am-4pm when sunlight is most intense
- ✓ Use sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or higher and reapply often, at least every two hours
- ✓ Use an SPF lip balm
- ✓ Protect your eyes- wear sunglasses
- ✓ Avoid indoor tanning
- ✓ Wear protective clothing: wide brimmed hat, long sleeves
- ✓ Stay hydrated



**Vitamin D** promotes calcium absorption and is important for our bone health. Though vitamin D is obtained from sun exposure, we can also obtain vitamin D from food or over the counter supplements, while maintaining good sun safety practices.

### Food sources of Vitamin D

- Fatty fish such as salmon, tuna, mackerel, and trout
- Fortified milk (both dairy and plant milk alternatives)
- Fortified cereal
- Eggs (yolk)
- Portabella mushrooms



The Capitol Square Healthcare team is here to help you on your healthcare journey-whether you have acute needs or need help managing chronic conditions.

Your healthcare team: Dr. Latrina Lemon, MD and Stephanie Glasser, NP

To schedule an appointment, visit [www.capitolsquarehealthcare.com](http://www.capitolsquarehealthcare.com) or call 844-342-1791.

In office and virtual appointments available.





# Delicious Fall Produce

Cooler weather and shorter days mean fall is here! Check out your local farmer's market for these yummy autumn vegetables and fruits!

**Pumpkin** – full of fiber, beta-carotene, and great for your skin and eyes. Enjoy sweeter pumpkins dishes or try adding savory herbs, such as sage and curry.



**Beets** – leafy greens and bulbous root are all edible. The leaves are similar to spinach and are delicious sautéed. Enjoy traditional red beets, or try golden or bull's blood, which are usually available at your local farmers market.

**Sweet Potato** – excellent source of potassium, fiber and vitamin A. Try them as a breakfast side dish, or serve them at any meal.

**Spaghetti Squash** – unique, low-calorie, gluten-free alternative to grain-based pasta. Easily cooks in the microwave or oven. When done, scrape a fork into the flesh and spaghetti-like strands appear! Delicious with marinara sauce or olive oil and herbs.

**Kale** – full of vitamins A, C, and K as well as manganese. Enjoy kale sautéed, cooked in soup, or raw in salad. Simply remove stems, slice into thin slivers, and pair with something a bit sweet like carrots or apples.

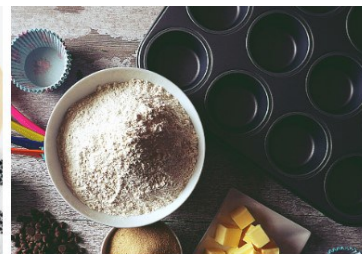
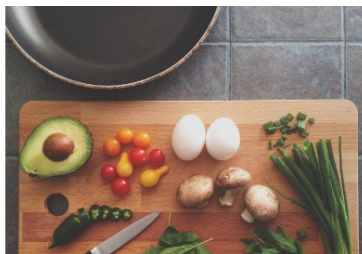
**Pears** – reach their peak in the fall. Pears are unique in that they do not ripen on the tree; they will ripen at room temperature after picked. Try them on the grill, tucked into a panini, in a smoothie, or simply sliced with cheese.

**Parsnips** – similar to carrots, they have the same root shape but with white flesh. Parsnips are usually cooked, but can be eaten raw. A delicious way to enjoy more fiber, vitamin C, and folate.

**Cranberries** – fall is the right time to enjoy these tart berries and all their nutritional benefits. Cranberries may help protect from urinary tract infection. Enjoy cranberries raw, cooked, or dried.

Article information adapted from:  
Academy for Nutrition and Dietetics;  
<https://www.eatright.org/food/nutrition/healthy-eating/9-fall-produce-picks-to-add-to-your-plate>





## Cooking with CommonHealth

### Slow Cooker Butternut Squash and Sage Stuffing

Let your slow cooker help you serve a delicious side dish loaded with savory, safe fruits and vegetables.

**Total Time** - 4 hr 55 min

**Prep** - 20 min     **Cook** - 4 hr 30 min

**Serves** 12

#### Ingredients

Unsalted butter - 1 Tbsp  
Uncooked butternut squash - 2 cup(s), diced  
Uncooked onion(s) - 1½ cup(s), chopped  
Uncooked celery - 1 cup(s), thinly sliced  
Sourdough bread - 10 oz, cut into 1-inch pieces  
Dried cranberries - ½ cup(s), chopped  
Fresh sage - 1 Tbsp, leaves, minced  
Rosemary - 1 tsp, fresh, chopped  
Table salt - ½ tsp  
Black pepper - ½ tsp, freshly ground  
Fat-free reduced sodium chicken broth - 1¼ cup(s)  
Egg(s) - 2 large egg(s), at room temperature  
Cooking spray - 2 spray(s)



#### Instructions

1. Melt butter in a large skillet set over medium heat. Add squash, onion, and celery; cook, stirring often, until onion softens, 5 minutes.
2. Scrape vegetable mixture into a large bowl; add bread, cranberries, sage, rosemary, salt, and pepper, and stir well.
3. Whisk broth and eggs in a small bowl until smooth; pour over bread mixture, and toss well until liquid has been absorbed.
4. Lightly coat inside of a 4- to 6-quart slow cooker with cooking spray; add bread mixture in an even layer. Lay paper towels across top of slow cooker so they hang over edges, completely covering stuffing but not touching ingredients below; cover and cook on low until set, 4 ½ hours.

Serving size: 2/3 cup

**Notes** - Save some of the celery leaves for garnish.





## Your game plan:

- 
- A collection of WW-branded kitchen items. On the left, two blue spatulas with wooden handles are in a clear glass. Next to them is a small glass with the WW logo. In the center, a book titled 'FLAVOR POP' is visible. To its right is a blue box with the text 'Over \$100 value' in a red circle, 'over \$100 value' in white, and 'Your journey starts here.' on the side. A whisk is on top of the box. In front of the box is a blue card that says 'Over \$50 in savings!' and 'on products available at ww.com/shop, participating WW Studios and grocery stores'. To the left of the card are blue tongs. In the foreground, a white napkin with the WW logo and the text 'life is delicious' and 'don't worry, cook happy' is visible.

Join by August 31 and

Get a **FREE**  
Goal Getter Kit\*

with your WW membership.

## Join today!

1. Sign up for WW by August 31. All employees, spouses, and adult dependents get an exclusive discount of 50% off the retail price and can join now for as low as \$8.48 per month. Sign up [WW.com/us/CommonHealth](https://www.ww.com/us/CommonHealth) The Special Monthly Pricing and The Commonwealth of Virginia discount per month is not open to retirees, their spouses and dependents, wage employees or The Local Choice members.
2. Get your Goal Getter Kit at [WW.com/GoalGetter](https://www.ww.com/GoalGetter)

**Already a WW member?** You can sync your current WW account to get this discount.

**Questions on signing up or syncing your current account?** Call WW customer service at 866-204-2885.

\* **FREE Goal Getter Kit offer:** To get a free kit, you must purchase a WW membership plan between August 1 and August 31, 2021. Available only where WW membership plans are offered through your employer or health plan, and in participating areas only. One kit per member. Kit must be redeemed by September 11, 2021. While supplies last. Over \$100 in value includes \$50 worth of coupons. U.S. addresses only. Please allow at least 3 to 4 weeks for delivery. Offer not available to current members. Offer may be revoked at any time and may not be redeemed for cash. Nontransferable. Void where prohibited.

\*\* "Monthly" price reflects the Digital membership plan for your organization's employees. Monthly payment is required in advance. You will be automatically charged each month in accordance with company pricing until you cancel or your employment with your organization terminates.

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## Don't Forget Those Other Important Vaccines

Well-visits and routine vaccinations in adults and children are important, and are essential preventive care services. Some of us may have let those slide in the past year.

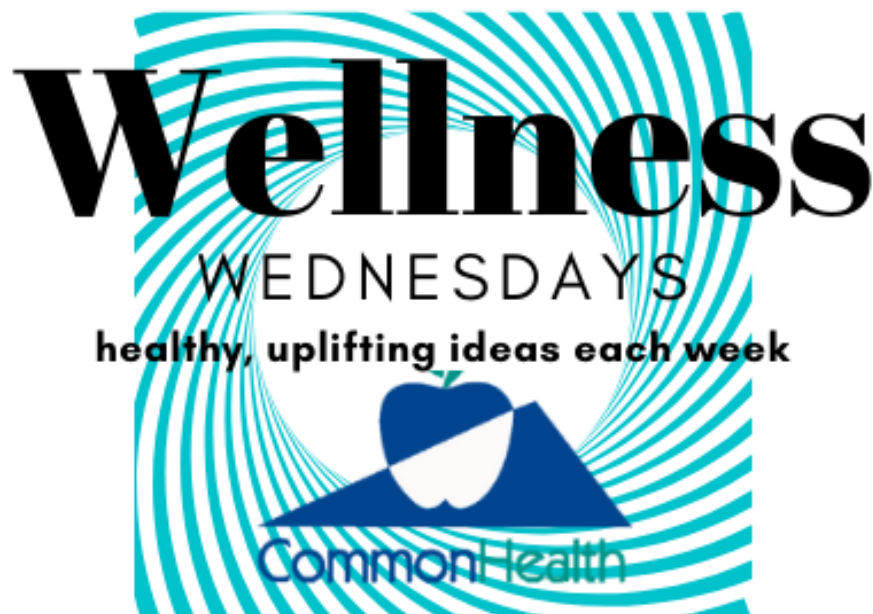
Since March 2020, Virginia has rightfully had a laser focus on addressing the COVID-19 pandemic. And now, life-saving vaccines are giving us hope that we can soon return to some kind of normal.

While the attention has been on the COVID-19 vaccine, the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#) [says](#) that delivery of other essential, life-saving vaccines has significantly declined. While it may be more challenging to keep up with important health care appointments and vaccines, it's crucial to continue our preventive care



for children, adolescents, and adults. Call your doctor to schedule well-visits and vaccinations soon.

Having a healthy workforce and healthy families benefits us all with increased productivity and lower absenteeism. Now is the time to get back on track with vaccinations. Protect yourself and your community!



[HTTPS://FORMS.GLE/ZRTEWZFRHFAVX8BN6](https://forms.gle/ZRTEWZFRHFAVX8BN6)  
TO SIGN UP

# Welcomes and Congratulations:

## Employee Announcements

Sarah Frame joins DHRM and the Human Resources Consulting Services team as the new Virginia Management Fellows (VMF) Program Coordinator. She will provide program management for the VMF Program. Sarah is experienced with supporting and developing university students. Sarah has many interests including travel (she studied in Salamanca, Spain in college) and playing the guitar. Sarah is also artistic and likes to paint, draw, make jewelry, and create digital art.



Jon Carpenter has been working with DHRM as a contractor in the Office of Workers' Compensation since 2006. During that time, he created and voiced all of the program's online training programs, worked on many of the mandatory DHRM courses, served as the COVLC Domain Administrator for DHRM, and served as the co-instructor of the SHRM Learning System course. Jon is a fan of French Dip sandwiches, Presidents, Marvel movies, his cat, heavy sarcasm, and trivia.

DHRM welcomes Zahir Panahi, our new Fiscal Technician. Zahir has more than 7 years of private sector and governmental experience, stateside and abroad; and has held roles such as Contract Support Specialist, Voucher Examiner, and Finance Senior Officer. His experience includes researching and reviewing purchasing actions in accordance with Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR); processing fiscal transactions; completing cash and bank reconciliations; and training employees on expense reporting.



DHRM and the Office of Workforce Engagement welcomes Christina Higgs as the new Associate Wellness Consultant for CommonHealth. Her passion for health and wellness can be traced back to her pre-professional days. Whether participating in cheerleading or volunteering at the campus women's center at Old Dominion University, she was intentional about her overall well-being.

Loni Dickerson joined the Shared Services Center team as the new Diversity Employment Specialist. Loni has a background in full-cycle recruiting, supporting the Commonwealth's efforts to hire a highly qualified and diverse workforce. We are excited that Loni will expand our efforts to source diverse talent for the Shared Services Center client agencies. Loni is very competitive in bowling, and she collects magnets.



Reshaud Rich of SCHEV recently published his debut book about the different roles that adult males play in their development and experiences. He affectionately calls it a "notes book" because he wants both men and women to jot their thoughts and questions in between chapters.



# *In Our Next Edition*

INFO & TIPS  
PHOTOS  
COLLEAGUES  
YOU

SEND PHOTOS, ARTICLES, IDEAS TO  
[EMPLOYEEEXPERIENCE@DHRM.VIRGINIA.GOV](mailto:EMPLOYEEEXPERIENCE@DHRM.VIRGINIA.GOV)

Send your submissions in by September 15, 2021  
to [employeeexperience@dhrm.virginia.gov](mailto:employeeexperience@dhrm.virginia.gov)

Upcoming Event information for employees

Articles relating to agencies and employees

News of new hires, promotions, agency changes

Photos! Agency events, Anywhere activities, etc.

(Don't forget your "pandemic pets" stories and photos!)

Text submissions in Word. Photo/ad submissions in PNG or JPEG.

All agencies may submit entries!